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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 227151

E.O. 12356: N/A  
TAGS: PTER GR  
SUBJECT: FACT SHEET ON 17 NOVEMBER

¶1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF FACT SHEET ON THE REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION 17 NOVEMBER WHICH WAS RELEASED PUBLICLY ON JULY 6. COPIES OF THE FACT SHEET BEING POUCHED TO POST ALSO INCLUDE TWO CHARTS DEPICTING THE NUMBERS OF TERRORIST ATTACKS BY YEAR FROM 1975-86, AND THE TYPES OF TARGETS FOR THESE ATTACKS (US MILITARY, US DIPLOMATS GREEK POLICE, GREEK BUSINESSMEN, ETC.)

¶2. BEGIN TEXT.

#### ACTIVE AND LETHAL

GREECE'S "REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION 17 NOVEMBER" IS PRESENTLY ONE OF THE MORE ACTIVE AND LETHAL TERRORIST

GROUPS TARGETTING AMERICANS IN WESTERN EUROPE. AND FREQUENTLY ATTACKS GREEK CITIZENS AS WELL. SUCCESSIVE GREEK GOVERNMENTS HAVE YET TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN APPREHENDING ANY MEMBER OF THE GROUP.

SINCE ITS INITIAL APPEARANCE WITH THE DECEMBER 1975 ASSASSINATION OF U.S. DIPLOMAT RICHARD WELCH IN ATHENS, THE GROUP HAS CARRIED OUT 29 ATTACKS -- ALL IN ATHENS. SEVEN OF THESE ATTACKS HAVE BEEN AGAINST U.S. TARGETS IN WHICH 17 NOVEMBER KILLED THREE AMERICANS, WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR TWO ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATIONS, AND INJURED 26 AMERICANS IN THE BOMBINGS OF TWO MILITARY BUSES.

FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES, MULTIPLE BUT RELATED ATTACKS -- SUCH AS THE FEBRUARY 1989 BOMBINGS OF THREE UNOCCUPIED RESIDENCES -- ARE COUNTED AS SEPARATE INCIDENTS.

VERY LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT THE GROUP'S MEMBERSHIP, ITS INTERNAL DYNAMICS, OR ITS OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES. SINCE 1975, 17 NOVEMBER HAS AVERAGED JUST OVER TWO ATTACKS A YEAR MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON THE GROUP EXCEPT THROUGH ITS COMMUNIQUES AND ITS CHOICE OF TARGETS.

#### NEW TACTICS AND TARGETTING

FOLLOWING THE FEBRUARY 21, 1985 ASSASSINATION OF GREEK PUBLISHER NIKOS MOMFERATOS, 17 NOVEMBER MOVED INTO A NEW OPERATIONAL PHASE. WHILE THERE WERE ONLY FIVE ATTACKS IN THE FIRST TEN YEARS OF ITS EXISTENCE (THREE OF THESE AGAINST AMERICANS), THE SECOND AND CURRENT PHASE IS CHARACTERIZED BY A HIGHER LEVEL OF SOPHISTICATION AS WELL AS AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER AND LETHALITY OF ATTACKS.

IN THIS SECOND PHASE, 17 NOVEMBER HAS CARRIED OUT 24 ATTACKS, KILLING SEVEN PEOPLE AND INJURING 43, INCLUDING ITS LASTEST ATTACK, THE ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF FORMER MINISTER OF PUBLIC ORDER GEORGE PETROS ON MAY 8, 1989 IN WHICH PETROS AND TWO BODY GUARDS WERE WOUNDED. THIS PERIOD OF JUST OVER FOUR YEARS ACCOUNTS FOR 83 PERCENT OF THE GROUP'S OPERATIONS SINCE ITS FIRST APPEARANCE IN 1975.

ALTHOUGH 17 NOVEMBER CARRIED OUT NO BOMBINGS DURING ITS FIRST PHASE, THE GROUP HAS CARRIED OUT 16 BOMBINGS AND TWO ATTEMPTED BOMBINGS IN ITS SECOND PHASE, INCLUDING FIVE REMOTE- AND ONE WIRE-DETONATED BOMB ATTACKS (FOUR OF THESE BEING DIRECTED AGAINST U.S. TARGETS). THESE BOMBINGS RESULTED IN TWO DEATHS AND 43 INJURIES

(INCLUDING ONE U.S. MILITARY OFFICER DEAD AND 26 OTHER AMERICANS INJURED).

ALSO DURING THIS PERIOD, 17 NOVEMBER ASSASSINATED TWO GREEK INDUSTRIALISTS, CARRIED OUT THREE ARMED ASSAULTS/KNEE-CAPPINGS, AND SEIZED A SUBURBAN POLICE STATION, MAKING OFF WITH A SMALL ARSENAL OF WEAPONS. THE INCREASE IN TERRORIST ATTACKS MAY BE ATTRIBUTED IN PART TO THE RECRUITMENT OF NEW AND YOUNGER MEMBERS WHO HAVE CONVINCED THE LEADERSHIP THAT THE GROUP'S GOALS AND OBJECTIVES CANNOT BE ACCOMPLISHED BY PERIODIC ASSASSINATIONS ONLY.

DESPITE THIS INCREASE IN TERRORIST ACTIVITY, 17 NOVEMBER APPEARS TO BE LIMITED IN THE NUMBER OF ATTACKS IT CAN CARRY OUT IN ANY GIVEN YEAR. MORE ATTACKS WOULD MEAN EXPANDING THE SIZE OF THE ORGANIZATION, WHICH COULD RUN THE RISK OF COMPROMISING ITS INTERNAL SECURITY. SINCE 17 NOVEMBER IS BELIEVED TO BE A SINGLE TERRORIST ENTITY RATHER THAN A GROUP COMPRISED OF MANY OPERATIONAL CELLS, IT CANNOT CARRY OUT AS MANY ATTACKS AS A LARGER GROUP. THIS LIMITS THE GROUP'S POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES AS THE MORE ATTACKS IT CARRIES OUT, THE GREATER THE CHANCES OF IT BEING CAUGHT.

#### SOPHISTICATED WEAPONRY

17 NOVEMBER'S RECENT USE OF REMOTE-CONTROLLED EXPLOSIVES INCREASES THE SERIOUS SECURITY CONCERN IT POSES FOR BOTH GREEKS AND AMERICANS. THE NOVEMBER 26, 1985 ATTACK ON A GREEK POLICE BUS TRANSPORTING (MAT) RIOT POLICEMEN WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE GROUP USED SUCH A DEVICE, WOUNDING THIRTEEN OF THE 22 POLICEMEN ON BOARD. ONE OF WHOM LATER DIED OF HIS WOUNDS. A REMOTE-DETONATED CAR BOMB WAS USED IN THE ASSASSINATION OF THE U.S. DEFENSE ATTACHE, NAVY CAPTAIN WILLIAM NORDEEN, ON JUNE 28, 1988. MOST RECENTLY, ANOTHER REMOTE-DETONATED CAR BOMB INJURED FORMER MINISTER OF PUBLIC ORDER GEORGE PETROS AND TWO BODY GUARDS ON MAY 8, 1989.

WITH THE USE OF REMOTELY-CONTROLLED EXPLOSIVES, 17 NOVEMBER HAS BECOME A HIGHLY LETHAL TERRORIST ORGANIZATION. THESE DEVICES ARE PROVEN CAPABLE OF CAUSING MAJOR DESTRUCTION, EVEN AGAINST ARMORED VEHICLES, THUS RENDERING PROTECTIVE DEFENSES INADEQUATE. THE AUGUST 1988 ATTACK ON A SUBURBAN POLICE STATION DEMONSTRATES THAT 17 NOVEMBER IS CAPABLE OF MOUNTING A SOPHISTICATED TERRORIST ATTACK USING SEVERAL OPERATIVES AGAINST A SECURE SITE. THE ATTACK NETTED THE GROUP ADDITIONAL HIGH-POWERED WEAPONRY WHICH MIGHT BE USED IN FUTURE LETHAL ATTACKS.

#### BACKGROUND AND IDEOLOGY

THE GROUP TAKES ITS NAME FROM THE DATE IN 1973 WHEN THE GREEK JUNTA SENT RIOT POLICE BACKED BY TANKS INTO THE ATHENS POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE TO STOP AN OCCUPATION BY STUDENTS DEMANDING AN END TO MILITARY RULE. AT LEAST 20 PEOPLE WERE KILLED AND 200 PEOPLE WERE INJURED IN THE INCIDENT. THIS EVENT GALVANIZED PUBLIC DISSATISFACTION WITH THE MILITARY REGIME AND SERVED AS A PRELUDE FOR A SERIES OF EVENTS THAT EVENTUALLY LED TO ITS DOWNFALL IN JULY 1974. ITS COMMUNIQUES OVER THE YEARS SHOW 17 NOVEMBER TO BE A VIOLENT MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANIZATION THAT IS DOCTRINALLY ANTI-CAPITALIST, ANTI-U.S. AND ANTI-NATO.

THE GROUP HAS ALSO BEEN VERY CRITICAL OF THE GREEK GOVERNMENT FOR NOT ADDRESSING A NUMBER OF ISSUES THAT IT VIEWS AS INIMICAL TO GREEK INTERESTS, SUCH AS THE SITUATION IN CYPRUS, THE GREECE-TURKEY RAPPROACHMENT, THE PRESENCE OF U.S. BASES, AND GREEK MEMBERSHIP IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO) AND THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY (EC). 17 NOVEMBER ALSO VIEWS ITSELF AS THE "VANGUARD OF THE WORKING CLASS." IT IS QUICK TO REACT TO DOMESTIC ISSUES -- TAXES, LABOR,

HIGH MEDICAL COSTS -- WHICH ARE OF IMMEDIATE CONCERN TO THE GREEK PEOPLE. FOR THESE REASONS, NEARLY TWO-THIRDS OF ITS ATTACKS HAVE BEEN AGAINST GREEK TARGETS.

#### ORGANIZATION

17 NOVEMBER'S ORGANIZATION MAY BE SIMILAR TO OTHER LEFT-WING EUROPEAN TERRORIST GROUPS SUCH AS WEST GERMANY'S RED ARMY FACTION RAF) AND FRANCE.S ACTION DIRECT (AD). IT IS A SMALL, HIGHLY-DISCIPLINED GROUP WHOSE "HARD CORE" MEMBERS PROBABLY NUMBER NO MORE THAN 20 PEOPLE. IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE, BUT JUDGING FROM SIMILAR RADICAL GROUPS IN WEST EUROPE, THEY ARE PROBABLY COLLECTIVE.

THE GROUP'S HARD CORE MEMBERS MAY HAVE BEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS DURING THE 1970.S IN GREECE, AND POSSIBLY WERE INVOLVED IN THE CAMPUS ACTIVITY THAT HELPED BRING ABOUT

THE FALL OF THE MILITARY JUNTA. TODAY, THIS HARD CORE WOULD HAVE REACHED THEIR LATE 30'S AND EARLY 40'S, SOME COULD EVEN BE HOLDING PROFESSIONAL JOBS SUCH AS LAWYERS, JOURNALISTS AND TEACHERS. IF THESE MEMBERS ARE INDEED "PART-TIME" TERRORISTS (AS OPPOSED TO TERRORISTS WHO LIVE TOTALLY UNDERGROUND), IT WOULD ENHANCE THE VEIL OF SECRECY OVER 17 NOVEMBER'S ORGANIZATION.

ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF TIES TO FOREIGN TERRORIST GROUPS, 17 NOVEMBER MAY BE AFFILIATED WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE (ELA), BELIEVED TO BE A LOOSE COALITION OF VIOLENT, EXTREME LEFTIST GROUPS IN GREECE.

#### FUTURE PROSPECTS

IN CONTRAST TO OTHER WEST EUROPEAN TERRORIST GROUPS, 17 NOVEMBER HAS NEVER TARGETED A CURRENT HIGH-RANKING GREEK GOVERNMENT OR MILITARY OFFICIAL, ALTHOUGH IT DID ATTEMPT TO KILL A FORMER PUBLIC ORDER MINISTER. THE GROUP MAY FEEL THAT THE TIME IS NOT RIGHT FOR AN ATTACK ON A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GOVERNING SYSTEM AND THAT IT IS NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO WITHSTAND THE REPERCUSSIONS THAT WOULD FOLLOW. 17 NOVEMBER HAS ALSO NEVER CARRIED OUT AN ATTACK AGAINST NON-OFFICIAL AMERICANS OR THEIR OFFICES, WHETHER TOURISTS OR BUSINESSMEN, NOR HAS IT PROMINENTLY MENTIONED A U.S. COMPANY IN ITS COMMUNIQUES -- PERHAPS INDICATING THAT TARGETING U.S. FIRMS IS NOT CURRENTLY A HIGH PRIORITY, ALTHOUGH THIS TOO COULD CHANGE.

THE SERIOUS THREAT BY 17 NOVEMBER TO OFFICIAL U.S. PERSONNEL AND FACILITIES IN GREECE, HOWEVER, CONTINUES UNCHECKED. IN THE LAST PARAGRAPH OF ITS COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWING THE JUNE 1988 ASSASSINATION OF CAPTAIN NORDEEN, 17 NOVEMBER RATIONALIZED ITS ACTIONS SAYING THAT AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES IN THE COUNTRY WERE AN OCCUPATION FORCE, AND: WE ARE GOING TO HIT ANYBODY WHO IS A MEMBER OF IT OR AN AGENT OF ITS SECRET SERVICES. THESE ACTIONS ARE GOING TO CONTINUE AND ARE GOING TO INCREASE UNTIL THE LAST TURKISH SOLDIER LEAVES CYPRUS AND THE LAST AMERICAN SOLDIER LEAVES OUR COUNTRY.

#### 17 NOVEMBER CHRONOLOGY OF ATTACKS IN ATHENS

1976

DECEMBER 23      THE REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION  
                  17 NOVEMBER, A PREVIOUSLY  
  
                  UNKNOWN GROUP, CLAIMED CREDIT  
                  FOR ASSASSINATING U.S. DIPLOMAT  
                  RICHARD WELCH OUTSIDE HIS HOME.

1976

DECEMBER 14      EVANGELOS MALLIOS, A FORMER  
                  POLICE CAPTAIN DURING THE GREEK  
                  MILITARY JUNTA (1967-74), WAS

SHOT AND FATALLY WOUNDED BY A LONE GUNMAN WHILE WALKING HOME, DYING FOUR HOURS LATER IN SURGERY.

1980

JANUARY 16 MAJOR GENERAL PANTELIS PETROU, DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE ATHENS RIOT POLICE (MAT) AND FORMER INTELLIGENCE OFFICER DURING THE GREEK MILITARY JUNTA, AND HIS DRIVER WERE SHOT AND KILLED WHILE DRIVING HOME FROM WORK AFTER THREE MEN IN A CAR FORCED PETROU'S CAR TO STOP.

1983

NOVEMBER 15 U.S. NAVY CAPTAIN GEORGE TSANTES AND HIS GREEK DRIVER NIKOLAOS VELOUTSOS WERE SHOT AND KILLED WHEN TSANTES' CAR WAS STOPPED AT A TRAFFIC LIGHT. TWO MEN ON A MOTOCYCLE PULLED ALONGSIDE TSANTES'S CAR AND SHOT BOTH MEN.

1984

APRIL 3 U.S. ARMY MASTER SERGEANT ROBERT ~~H.~~ JUDD, JR. WAS ATTACKED BY TWO MEN ON A MOTORCYCLE WHILE STOPPED AT A TRAFFIC LIGHT. THE ATTACKERS HAD PULLED UP ALONGSIDE JUDD'S CAR AND FIRED FIVE ROUNDS AT HIM. JUDD WAS ABLE TO TAKE EVASIVE ACTION AND ESCAPED WITH ONLY MINOR INJURIES.

1985

FEBRUARY 21 NIKOS MOMFERATOS, PUBLISHER OF GREECE'S LARGEST CONSERVATIVE NEWSPAPER APOGEVMATINI (AFTERNOONER), AND HIS DRIVER WERE SHOT AND KILLED BY TWO GUNMEN WHO OPENED FIRE AS MOMFERATOS' CAR SLOWED DOWN TO MAKE A LEFT TURN.

NOVEMBER 26 THIRTEEN (MAT) RIOT POLICEMEN WERE INJURED, ONE LATER DIED, AS A POWERFUL CAR BOMB EXPLODED AS THEIR POLICE BUS PASSED BY.

1986

APRIL 8 DEMITRIOS ANGELOPOULOS A GREEK STEEL MAGNATE, WAS SHOT AND KILLED BY A LONE GUNMAN WHILE WALKING TO WORK.

OCTOBER 5 FOUR SEPARATE GOVERNMENT TAX OFFICES LOCATED AROUND ATHENS WERE BOMBED IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS. NO ONE WAS HURT IN THE EXPLOSIONS.

1987

FEBRUARY 4 DR. ZACHARIAS KAPSALAKIS, WHO WAS LEAVING HIS OFFICE WITH HIS WIFE, WAS ATTACKED BY TWO MEN WHO APPROACHED AND SHOT HIM SEVERAL TIMES IN THE STOMACH AND LEGS. (THIS ATTACK MARKED A DEPARTURE FROM PAST 17 NOVEMBER ARMED ASSAULTS SINCE THE VICTIM

PURPOSELY WAS NOT KILLED.)

APRIL 24 SIXTEEN AMERICANS AND TWO GREEK CITIZENS WERE INJURED WHEN A BOMB EXPLODED IN FRONT OF A MILITARY BUS CARRYING U.S. SERVICEMEN.

AUGUST 10 TEN AMERICANS AND TWO GREEK CITIZENS WERE INJURED WHEN A CAR BOMB EXPLODED AS A U.S. MILITARY BUS PASSED BY.

1988

JANUARY 22 AN ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE A DEA AGENT IN ATHENS WITH A REMOTE-DETONATED BOMB FAILED WHEN THE TERRORIST RESPONSIBLE FOR DETONATING THE DEVICE WAS FRIGHTENED OFF BY A PASSER-BY.

MARCH 1 GREEK INDUSTRIALIST ALEXANDROS ATHANASIADIS WAS SHOT AND FATALLY WOUNDED BY AN ASSASSIN ON A MOTORCYCLE.

MAY 23 ATTEMPTS TO ASSASSINATE FOUR TURKISH DIPLOMATS WITH BOMBS PLACED UNDER THEIR CARS FAILED. TWO OF THE BOMBS EXPLODED WITH NO CASUALTIES, WHILE TWO OTHERS WERE DISCOVERED AND DESTROYED.

JUNE 28 THE U.S. DEFENSE ATTACHE, NAVY CAPTAIN WILLIAM NORDEEN, WAS ASSASSINATED IN A REMOTE-DETONATED CAR BOMB EXPLOSION.

AUGUST 15 AN ATHENS SUBURBAN POLICE STATION WAS SEIZED BY 17 NOVEMBER TERRORISTS. THE POLICE OFFICERS WERE TIED UP AND A SMALL ARSENAL OF WEAPONS WERE TAKEN.

1989

JANUARY 10 17 NOVEMBER CLAIMED CREDIT FOR SEPARATE

JANUARY 18 SHOOTING ATTACKS WHICH WOUNDED TWO GOVERNMENT PROSECUTORS, ONE OF WHOM LATER DIED FROM COMPLICATIONS STEMMING FROM HIS INJURIES. (A THIRD GOVERNMENT PROSECUTOR WAS KILLED LATER IN

JANUARY BY THE 1ST OF MAY GROUP, WHICH MAY BE LINKED TO 17 NOVEMBER.)

FEBRUARY 22 THREE UNOCCUPIED RESIDENCES WERE BOMBED TO CALL ATTENTION TO HIGH HOUSING COSTS.

MAY 8 FORMER MINISTER OF PUBLIC ORDER GEORGE PETSOS, ALONG WITH TWO BODY GUARDS, WERE INJURED IN A REMOTE-DETONATED CAR BOMB EXPLOSION.

//END//

THE OFFICE OF THE COORDINATOR FOR COUNTER-TERRORISM APPRECIATES THE ASSISTANCE OF

THE THREAT ANALYSIS DIVISION OF THE BUREAU OF  
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